

Dating Violence

Dating violence or abuse affects one in four teens. Abuse isn't just hitting. It's yelling, threatening, name-calling, saying "I'll kill myself if you leave me," obsessive phone calling or paging and extreme possessiveness. If you know someone that may be in this situation, please share this information with them and urge them to contact someone for help.

Are you going out with someone who:

- Is jealous and possessive, checks up on you, won't let you have friends or won't accept breaking up?
- Tries to control you by being bossy or giving orders?
- Puts you down in front of friends or tells you that you would be nothing without him or her?
- Scares you? Threatens you? Uses or owns weapons?
- Is violent? Loses temper quickly, grabs, pushes or shoves you?
- Pressures you for sex or is forceful or scary about sex?
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs and pressures you to use them?
- Believes that he or she should be in control of the relationship?
- Makes your family and friends uneasy and concerned for your safety?
- If you answered yes to any of these questions you could be a victim of dating abuse. Both males and females can be victims of dating abuse.

What to do if you want out:

- Don't put up with the abuse! You deserve better!
- Know that you are not alone. Teens from all different backgrounds have been involved in violent relationships.
- Understand that you have done nothing wrong. It is not your fault!
- Know that the longer you stay in the relationship, the worse the violence will become.
- Recognize that being drunk or high is NOT an excuse for someone to be abusive.
- Plan and rehearse what you will do the next time he or she becomes abusive.
- Talk with a friend, family member or counselor that you trust.
- Know that you can get help from the sheriff's office, counselors, rape crisis centers, health services, etc.
- Alert a school counselor or school resource officer to the abuse.
- Keep a daily log of the abuse for evidence.

After you break off the relationship:

DO NOT meet him or her alone.

These relationships may often end in what is called "stalking crimes". If the individual refuses to let you alone, or refuses to accept that the relationship is over. It is a crime in Virginia to stalk and place people in fear. If you have any instances where the individual begins to follow you or telephone you obsessively, contact the Sheriff's Office immediately. These types of cases have been known to escalate into violent crimes.